

## THINGS SEEN AND UNSEEN.

The really valuable things; what are they and how may they be obtained? The world about us makes a great show of itself, with its blaring trumpets, its big battalions, its bank accounts, its gaudy self consciousness. It sets itself up, claiming the homage and service of men. It offers its gains, its rewards, its glories to satisfy the needs and aspirations of humanity. It proposes to make itself a heaven for man, and all in the brief life here given to him.

But the religion of Christ denies all this with the great question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The really precious things are the spiritual. Our Lord gave that as the reason why he was willing, against the protest of Peter, to go to Jerusalem, "suffer many things and be killed."

The Apostle Paul learned the great lesson. In a life of unsurpassed hardship, struggle and suffering, sick, disowned, rejected, as was the Master, he utters the same message to the world. "Through our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen." The unseen things are the real things, the lasting things, the precious things. For them the world and all that it offers is not worth while.

In the world of nature, the most real things, the things that do the most work, are unseen and not on the surface. The ocean is a vast unmeasurable bulk of water. But it is the servant of something unseen, the silent, steady pull of gravitation as the moon swings round the earth and the sea rises and swells and sweeps in tides upon every shore.

History teaches the same lesson. After all, it is not the big battalions that are the mightiest things; the virtues of the people back of the battalions have the greater and ultimate power. When the Pope seemed most firmly seated on his throne, it was a lone monk, Martin Luther, who defied him. When for generations the English invaders had lorded it over France, it was the voice and courage of a peasant girl, Joan of Arc, that drove them back across the channel.

It is of the very essence of our Christianity to see in spiritual, unseen forces, which the world ignores, forgets or despises, the really great powers of the world. Ideas, truths, sown like seed by the Word of God have kept the world of mankind from utter corruption and self-destruction. The silent graces of humility, meekness, self-sacrifice, faith, prayer, hope, these are the mighty things of life. Outwardly Jesus failed utterly. He came claiming to be the Lord from heaven, the Messiah of the scriptures, the Savior of the world, and "He was despised and rejected of men." The few who followed him, forsook him before he died. Under a darkened heaven, amid the revilings and curses of men, the shameful cross bore him to death. Yet what a triumph has been that of the lowly Nazarene, who left not even a book behind to perpetuate his teaching. The whole world is being steadily, irresistibly drawn unto him who has been lifted up, and by him it is remade.

We have to choose sides in life, the seen or the un-

seen; God the great unseen, making no "vain show," or mammon, the brazen world-god. Mammon worshippers "have their reward," but the God worshippers look for it beyond. Not that in this life those who follow Jesus do not rejoice,—they are the happiest of men,—but they know that the joy of today is but a foretaste of what is yet to come. The Christian lives in the world, but is also a citizen of heaven. And when this world has been dissipated, as it certainly will be by and by, his heavenly citizenship will remain intact. J. P. S.

## A DRAFT UPON THE PULPIT.

Not insignificant in recent years has been the draft made upon the regular ministry to fill positions which modern methods of ecclesiastical activity and organization have demanded. Executive committee secretaryships, "movement" organizers, general and district superintendencies, professorships, presidencies, editorships, Bible agencies, financial agencies, Y. M. C. A. secretaryships and many such positions have been multiplied in recent years. The number of men called upon to fill these places has been a distinct loss to the pulpit. Whether there is any remedy for it, one would have difficulty in saying. Perhaps, as has been often suggested, many of these places might be filled with laymen. Consecrated business talent would oftentimes be just as effective in the executive agencies as consecrated ordination. Most of the places call for administrative ability more than oratorical power. If this fact were more emphasized there would perhaps be less pressure for such places than is sometimes witnessed.

A fruitful cause for the popularity of these positions may be the fact that pastors are not as regularly and adequately supported as they should be, compelling them to seek or to accept employment that will provide better for themselves and their families. So far as this aspect of the case is concerned, the matter lies with the people. If they desire to retain an active ministry, they must support it properly. It is not for them to declaim upon the lessening number of either ministers or recruits for the pulpit if they will not take good care of those whom they already have.

It will be well if those who have ambition to serve in some of these special places, just a little removed from the regular work, will notice that, after all, the uncertainties are but little removed, and greater permanency and better support but little better guaranteed. The changes, and usually from inability to gather the means of support, are relatively more frequent, we think, in this outside ministry than in the regular work. A little careful observation will reveal this. Many of the movements, organizations, agencies and secretaryships are ephemeral. Many of the professorships are meagrely provided for. The trials and arduous work are not lessened. The ease and permanency that are beautifully pictured to the mind and that allure the tired soul are not realized in one of a hundred cases.

When one's ministry in the regular work seems to be at an end, through age, the "dead line," unacceptability, or ill health, and an opening of this outside kind offers itself, the proposition is of an entirely different nature, and many a man whose work has ended elsewhere may have a splendid field of opportunity here. But these